I'll Be Your Mirror

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I'll Be Your Mirror

by Weconqueratdawn

Summary

Fourth part of the Quicksilver series - an AU where Will is 19, genderfluid and happily confident. Hannibal can't resist him.

Will's first weekend at Hannibal's takes a unexpected turn when he discovers a welcome surprise in the greenhouse. Or, Will and Hannibal get stoned and talk about lions and love.

Notes

Special thanks to TheSeaVoices for not only creating a whole series of really incredible illustrations for this fic, but for prompting pretty much all of it - it was so much fun coming up with this one :) And if you like the illustrations, please pop over to her ao3 entry and give her some love.

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See the end of the work for more notes

Hannibal's heavy front door slammed closed with a bang behind him. Will winced a little as it reverberated through the dark stillness of the entrance hall. He had just dropped his bags to the floor and begun taking off his boots when Hannibal appeared, eyebrow raised and smiling quietly.

"Sorry," Will said. "My front door needs a good shove to shut properly. Must be habit, I suppose."

"At least that indicates you feel at home," said Hannibal, and pressed a greeting kiss to Will's lips.

The message Will had received earlier simply said, "*Please just let yourself in - the door will be unlocked and I want you to feel at home this weekend."*

With his boots on they were the same height, but stepping out of them in front of Hannibal he felt smaller and more fragile than those meagre two inches could account for. Especially when Hannibal batted Will's hand away as he reached for his bags, and picked them up himself.

"If I was at home, I would take my own bags upstairs," Will observed, as Hannibal's broad back receded through the doorway with his rucksack incongruously slung over one shoulder.

He followed Hannibal deeper into the house, and climbed the stairs with him.

"And when you are at home with me, I trust you will indulge me in the illusion of looking after you," Hannibal said, over his shoulder.

They came to a halt in the bedroom, where Hannibal set the bags down with care. "There is space here for anything you would like to hang or put away. And in the bathroom also." He eyed Will's luggage - a bulging duffle bag in addition to the rucksack containing his college work. "My study is yours, if you require it. Or any quiet corner you prefer."

As he spoke, Hannibal pointed out the places Will already knew well. In the dressing room hung the robe he'd taken to wearing, put aside just for him. There was a spare toothbrush, *his toothbrush*, in the bathroom next to Hannibal's, and other things too - some hair ties, the shampoo he liked, razors. Hannibal had never explicitly said he could leave these things there, it had just happened. He already moved freely through Hannibal's house, had studied its contents and mapped its varied landscapes.

Marvelling a little at Hannibal's stiffness, a fond smile crept over Will's lips despite his best efforts to prevent it. He stepped closer, into the circle of Hannibal's arms as they rose around him.

"Don't worry," he said, "I know I'm welcome and I haven't been put off by the Japanese armour before."

He tucked his head into the crook of Hannibal's neck and waited for this statement to take effect. Almost imperceptibly, Hannibal's shoulders sagged in defeat and his arms tightened around him. Will kissed the exposed skin above his collar before tipping his head back to grin at him.

Hannibal sighed, and lifted his hand to Will's face, light fingers stroking along his hairline. "It's easy to forget your extraordinary knack for belonging here without any aid from me. I'll leave you to arrange your things - come and find me downstairs when you're ready."

Will let himself be kissed softly, and refrained from further comment. Their first weekend together was important and it was oddly reassuring that Hannibal should be nervous. It demonstrated a level of attachment which Will swung violently between believing in wholeheartedly to doubting anxiously. Sometimes it didn't seem possible that Hannibal had happened to him at all, and an elaborate series of hallucinations seemed a more reasonable explanation.

After Hannibal's quiet tread had faded from the stairs, Will knelt to unzip the duffle. He pulled out what had been a neatly folded pile when originally packed, and began arranging it in the dressing room. Hannibal had cleared an entire section of his floor-to-ceiling wardrobes - there was a hanger rail, shelves, and a shoe-rack beneath. Either he wanted to attempt to contain any mess Will might scatter around him or this was an important, silent offering.

When he was finished, he slid open the door adjacent and stepped back to consider his clothes, hanging next to Hannibal's. His own were a varied grab-bag - cheap and mass-produced, mostly in

reds and blues. He touched the smooth tailored wool of Hannibal's neighbouring suit jacket - it wasn't one he recognised, in pale blue plaid. There must be dozens he'd never seen. It awoke an absurd fear that no matter how he tried he would never fully comprehend him; that Hannibal's life was infinite in its complexity. He could open all the wardrobes right now, laying all his suits out to view, but could never know all the times they'd been worn, what Hannibal had been doing and who with. Who else might have touched the arm of his sleeve like that, softly, just because they could. For a moment he felt exceptionally lost, standing on the brink of something huge and yawning.

Distantly, he wondered if he was falling in love.

Will's attention settled on a fold of peach silk, almost hidden amongst the cotton and denim which made up the rest of his weekend wardrobe. Hannibal's latest gift. He brought to mind the warmth in Hannibal's expression as he'd watched Will open the box; how his hands had slid down his back when he'd tried it on; and smiled. It wasn't just expensive fabrics or beautiful garments Hannibal gave him, it was the opportunity for something Will hadn't experienced before - to be admired simply for what he was, not for the statement he might be making. When Hannibal bought him fine things it was because he thought he deserved them. With that thought, his worries seemed insubstantial, easily dispelled.

Before he went downstairs he took a last look around the bedroom and its menacingly luxurious decor, and felt nothing but happiness.

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Surprisingly, Hannibal wasn't to be found in the kitchen. The surfaces were pristine, free even of a single chopping board or pan waiting on the stove. Even at this early hour, even when Hannibal made something 'simple', there were usually signs of preparation - something marinating, or slow-cooking, or piles of perfectly-sliced vegetables ready for the wok. The hushed silence was almost eerie - without Hannibal the kitchen was like an empty stage.

A slight breeze tousled Will's hair and he turned into it, following it to its source in the dining room, where the French windows stood open. Outside, the day was sunny and warm, the kind of day he would spend with Bev in the garden, reading and talking and being distracted from studying. Here, surrounded by dark, cocooned comfort, it was easy to forget the world beyond. The memory of his sun-dappled walk from the bus stop had flown from his mind almost as soon as he'd stepped through the front door.

The sky above was clear and blue, and below it, on the lawn, were two severely-upholstered sun loungers and a table. On one of the loungers was Hannibal, beckoning Will over. Will jumped down onto the short grass, pleasantly cool between his bare toes, and wandered slowly over. The view of Hannibal stretched out on a sun lounger, still in a shirt and slacks, was something to be entertained by.

"I always forget you have an outside," Will said, ignoring the vacant sun lounger and clambering up to sit across Hannibal's thighs instead. "I just don't associate you with it somehow."

Hannibal smiled, shading his eyes from the sun. "It's a pleasant afternoon and errant creatures like yourself should not be kept cooped up indoors."

Will swatted him and ducked down for a kiss, but pulled back up sharply. "Is this thing stable? Will it tip up if I kiss you?"

“It is perfectly balanced.”

“Of course it is,” Will said, leaning in to catch Hannibal’s lips with his own. His skin was already sun-warmed and it tempted Will into arranging himself half on top of Hannibal. “I know that other one is for me but I prefer it here.”

Will shut his eyes and let himself drift with the warmth of the sun above and of Hannibal underneath him. They lay peacefully, until their breathing had synchronised perfectly, and Will couldn’t remember the fears he’d had in the dressing room. Anything which had gone before the present moment seemed utterly unimportant, except that it had brought them together.

“I was going to insist you relax this weekend, and let me look after you,” Hannibal said, eventually. “But apparently I didn’t need to try very hard.”

Will smiled into his cheek and said nothing.

*

It was hunger which eventually drove them to move. Will stretched and yawned, made sleepy by fresh air and the soft garden sounds. The sun had moved further round, bathing the garden more fully in its bright strong light.

“What are we eating?” he asked, as Hannibal attempted to smooth out the wrinkles Will had pressed into his clothes.

“A Mediterranean supper, mostly cold and already prepared. Though there is some fish to grill.”

Indoors, Hannibal began plating the food into little bowls and dishes. Will refused to stand around not helping so was given the task of preparing an ice bucket for the wine, already chilled from the refrigerator. Hannibal poured a little for himself and Will, but then paused.

“I have beer if you prefer that?” he said.

“No, I’m good with this.”

“Are you sure? I noticed you never want a second glass. I thought perhaps you didn’t enjoy it and were too polite to say.”

“That would be a first,” Will grinned. “No, really - I just don’t drink that much. The taste is fine, it’s the way it makes me feel - sort of numb. I prefer my mind switched on not shut down.”

Hannibal listened with a shrewd expression, leaning against the counter. After a moment, he put his glass down and asked, “Would you like to help me pick some tomatoes?”

“Sure,” Will said. “Where are they?”

“Come with me.”

They took the ice bucket and glasses out with them as Hannibal led Will back outside once more. Will set them on the table, and followed Hannibal around the corner of the house. The lawn curved round it and met with a sheltered courtyard on which an elegant greenhouse was set.

“A recent experiment,” Hannibal said. “Gardening is not a major interest of mine but the indoor herbs are extremely useful so I am dabbling in other kinds of cultivation.”

He opened the door and gestured Will inside, into its damp heat. The green peppery scent of fresh tomato leaves filled the air, undercut with rich compost and soil. Hannibal may have claimed not to be a gardener but the greenhouse was spacious, and equipped with misters and gauges for temperature, carbon dioxide and humidity.

The tomato vines were flourishing and dominated the interior, twined around supports which reached the ceiling and heavy with fruit. There were several different varieties - some large, fat, a glowing red, and some smaller and slowly ripening to bright topaz or deep garnet. Hannibal selected one, gently twisting it from the stem and tasted it thoughtfully. He nodded and picked another, this time holding it out to Will.

“See if you think I should continue the experiment,” he said.

Will gave him a small and knowing smile, it not being the first time Hannibal had showed an inclination to feed him. He held Hannibal's wrist steady and with his teeth plucked the tomato from his warm fingertips. It was perfectly ripe and burst beautifully on his tongue.

“Very nice,” Will said, drawing closer. “Maybe you should show me some more.”

Hannibal shot him an amused look and steered Will further down the line of plants.

“Try this,” he said, this time with an irregularly-shaped fruit, red as blood. He held it up almost to Will's lips, catching his eyes with his own. “And with some of this also.”

He pinched off some tiny leaves from a plant on the other side of the aisle. The sweet, fragrant aroma of basil filled the air between them. Will did as he was told, sliding the tomato into his mouth and biting into it, then all but sucking the crushed leaves from Hannibal's fingers. He chewed slowly as Hannibal studied his reactions with a hungry twinkle in his eye. The flavours ran deeper than he'd expected, impressively sweet and juicy, and a perfect match - harmonious and complex though produced by only two raw ingredients.

“That is Greek basil and a Black Plum” said Hannibal. “You see the difference they make when grown in the proper environment. The challenge to the cook is to create without losing what nature has already gifted and partnered perfectly. Today, we'll have these in a simple salad.”

“Are you going to feed them to me like that?” Will said, smirking openly. “I can't help thinking it adds a little something.”

Hannibal slipped his arm around Will and pulled him in, close to Hannibal and the plants. Will was just leaning in for an anticipated kiss when something caught his eye - a glimpse of something familiar poking up through the mass of tomato leaves over Hannibal's shoulder.

Will paused, inhaling deeply but it was hard to detect much under the scent of tomato leaves. “Hannibal, is that- ?” He sniffed again, and there it was - an unmistakable high note of warm sweetness which was definitely not tomatoes. “Oh my god, it is!”

He swung around Hannibal to push the tomato plants back, revealing the cannabis growing behind. It was flowering - if it hadn't been for the pollen spikes poking through the leaves he might never have noticed it all.

Will broke into disbelieving laughter. “Dabbling in other kinds of cultivation, are we?”

Hannibal smiled also, but only in a manner which suggested he was indulging Will in his amusement. “I am not always a conventional psychiatrist,” he said. “There are occasions where it can be therapeutic.”

“You give your patients marijuana? Which you've grown yourself?”

Head tilting in a minute shrug, Hannibal said, “Only some and only on occasion. And with their full consent, of course. Mainly for managing symptoms - pain or anxiety being the most common.”

“That is definitely not in any psychiatry standard codes of practice I know about.” Will looked at how well-tended the plants were and raised an eyebrow. “And none of it is for personal use?”

Hannibal’s arm slid around Will again, and he bent to look at Will, eyes very dark and sparkling. “Is that your way of asking to sample my produce?”

“Can I?” Will said, biting his lip, unable to stop his grin spreading. “Can we?”

*

They ate outside on the sun loungers, picking at the varied spread of dishes set out across the table between them. It was the first time Will had seen Hannibal prepare such an informal meal. Already the evening felt special, like a secret between them.

He sat cross-legged, plate balanced in his lap, and watched Hannibal sip wine opposite him. How he held the glass delicately by the stem, so not to risk warming the wine with his fingers - the very image of refinement and good taste. Will found it impossible to stop himself breaking out in smiles, thinking of his surprise in the greenhouse. Plenty of people Hannibal’s age and status would smoke, Will reasoned. Or take other drugs. It shouldn't seem so unlikely. But then, Will couldn't imagine him drunk either - though Hannibal frequently had a glass of wine to hand, he'd never even been close to tipsy. Maybe he would be exactly the same with a joint.

Hannibal watched his repeated smiles and caught his train of thought.

“It's just-” Will said, laughing teasingly once more. “-I keep thinking about Timothy Leary. Didn't have you pegged as an LA psychiatrist. What other surprises do you have tucked away?”

“I'm holding a consciousness-raising seminar next week,” he said, with a wicked look. “Perhaps you'd like to come along?”

“Do I have to supply my own acid, or is that included in the fee?” Will set his plate aside and hopped over to curl up next to Hannibal. “You have to admit, your ties are very psychedelic. And that powder-blue suit I saw upstairs when I unpacked…? I really should've seen this coming.”

“And what about you?” Hannibal asked. “What should I have seen coming?”

Will grinned and found his fingers were trailing up Hannibal's chest without his consent. “Are you really going to get high with me? I just can't picture it.”

Hannibal seized one of his wandering hands by the wrist and brought it to his mouth. He held it there for a moment, breath ghosting warm over Will's fingers. “Would it make you happy if I did?”

“Yes.”

“Then I shall,” he said simply, and kissed Will's fingertips.

*

When Will returned back to the garden, the light had shifted again. Hannibal had sent him to shower and change while he cleared up, only allowing Will to bring a pile of empty dishes into the kitchen before shooing him away. Now, the sun was lower and the light more golden, filtering through the overhanging branches of the dogwoods which bordered the small garden. Though much of the strong heat had begun to dissipate, the air was warm still and he stretched out on a sun lounger to bask.

There was a sound beside him, and he opened his eyes. Hannibal was looking down at him fondly. On the table was a bowl of cherries and a small dish with a couple of joints sat snugly inside. With a wide smile, Will slid over so Hannibal could join him. Hannibal’s fingers went straight to the hem of Will’s pyjama shirt, toying with it briefly before pushing it up to reveal more fully the matching shorts underneath.

Will shrugged, and said, “They're comfortable.”

Hannibal didn’t answer, only flashed his canines in a smile and kissed him possessively, pressing Will back into the cushion. His hand slid up under the shirt to rest palm-down on Will’s stomach - a heavy pressure against his skin, each finger splayed and curling into Will’s flesh. He squirmed beneath it, a welcome heat gathering at the base of his cock. Hannibal’s lips on his own were persistent but teasing, but instead of returning the kiss with fervour, Will let it flow over him. The evening was stretched out before them and he was determined to wring as much pleasure out of it as he could.

The kiss gentled slowly, until Hannibal pulled away to settle back onto the lounger. Will curled into his side, knees tucked up against Hannibal’s. He lay quietly, fingers playing with Hannibal’s shirt buttons as he produced a silver lighter from its pocket.

There was nothing at all out of place about Hannibal when he lit the first joint, Will thought. Nothing could be more perfect - the damp press of the paper catching lightly on his upper lip, his mouth tightening as he sucked air in deeply and the eventual slow soft exhale of fragrant smoke. He passed it to Will, who took it with a sigh of satisfaction. Will filled his lungs and savoured the restrained burn in his throat, holding and then releasing curling tendrils of smoke into the early summer air.

He blinked sleepily back at Hannibal, and took another drag, observing how Hannibal focused on his lips. He smiled and passed the joint back.

“Greedy,” Hannibal said, wrapping his arm around him.

They smoked for a while, hushed and peaceful, listening to the sounds of the garden around them. A few birds rustling and chittering in the bushes, the sway of leaves in the light breeze, and, very far away, the white noise of traffic. Will thought about all the people and busyness nearby, how he was one very small part of a vast and confused society. Just then, he couldn’t picture any other place he would fit so perfectly. Squinting up at the sky caused bright streaks in his vision where sunlight shone through his eyelashes. It was still clear, deepening into a rich saturated ultramarine where earlier it had been a pale watercolour wash.

“I have a confession,” he said, breaking their harmonious silence. He paused to inhale rich, peppery smoke once more. “Well. Not so much something to confess but something you should know. About me.”

Hannibal’s brows drew together slightly, as he took the joint again. It had burned down to nearly nothing. Will waited for him to finish and extinguish it, before continuing.

“I have a condition, a very rare one.” He broke off to smile at Hannibal. “Don’t look so worried, it’s nothing like that. I’m perfectly healthy, honestly.”

Hannibal turned on his side so they lay almost nose-to-nose. Will found himself distracted by the burnt-caramel colour of his eyes. It took a soft kiss nudged into the corner of his mouth to remind him of what he’d been going to say.

“My mind just works a little differently, that’s all. I have too much empathy than is comfortable sometimes,” he said. “I see too much in people, understand too much. I assume points of view I don’t want to, before I can stop myself. And it lingers, after.”

“An empathy disorder,” Hannibal said, reaching for the second joint and lighting it. “I have only read about those. Some dispute its existence.”

“Well, it exists,” Will said, laughing, reaching to pluck the cigarette from Hannibal’s fingers. Hannibal nosed along his jaw, barely-there kisses nuzzled into his skin. “I exist.”

“You very much do,” Hannibal agreed. “How do you find it affects you?”

Will snorted, and gave him a sidelong glance. “For starters, psychologists of all flavours really fucking love me.” He felt the teeth of Hannibal’s answering smile against his neck. “Sometimes it’s not great. Luckily I was diagnosed fairly young by a good psychologist - she taught me some things to manage it.” He shrugged and took another drag. “I just thought you should know.”

“Thank you for trusting me enough to tell me. And I promise to protect you from covetous psychologists.”

The image of wielding Hannibal like a snarling guard dog came to Will out of nowhere, making him laugh. “I’m sure you would, too.” He passed the joint back to Hannibal and settled back onto his chest. “There can be good stuff - to feel how connected everyone and everything is. How similar we all are underneath. The same drives, fears…”

Hannibal’s voice drifted down from above his head. “How deep does it go?”

“It depends. A lot of it is intuition, I guess. The empathy part is just raw data. Some people are unbearable to be around - the worst are the ‘open books'. It's all just… *there*.”

“What about me? You’ve already demonstrated how you see beneath my surface.”

“You I mostly find… *quiet*. It's not noisy in my head when you’re there. It was the first thing I noticed about you.” Will paused, smirking, thinking of how his train of thought had run. “Well, maybe the second thing.”

Hannibal was thoughtful underneath him, fingers twining through Will’s hair.

Will watched him think, taking the joint again. “It's probably why I wanted to see you again so much. It felt like…” He trailed off, chasing the memory of walking into Hannibal’s office for the first time. It had been like stepping into a cool forest glade after the scorching heat of the sun.

“... What?” Hannibal prompted.

“I felt immediately safe, sheltered somehow. I don't know.” He glanced at Hannibal, who was waiting with badly-disguised urgency. “It was strange. I'd just met you.”

Hannibal smiled, and pulled Will in for a kiss. Will fell into it bonelessly, beautifully drowsy yet aware of every single point of contact between them - the nudge of his hip bone into Hannibal’s side, the way their ankles were tangled together, the brush of his hair over Hannibal’s cheek. Their lips pressed hot together, a wet and messy heat of tongues and teeth. He moaned, rubbing himself a little into Hannibal’s solid side. But he had unfinished thoughts which tugged at his mind, pulling him out of his indulgent reverie. They formed slowly, until he drew back, frowning and searching for the correct words.

“But I think for most, you’d be something else. If they really looked.”

Hannibal stilled, eyes bright and lips parted. He licked them, even though they were wet already. “What would you see if you looked with another's eyes, Will?”

“Something concealed… a warning. You're not to be trifled with.”

A strange thing happened then - Will felt a flash of fear which was not his own, nor Hannibal’s. It passed and he was left feeling more certain of his place with Hannibal than ever before. Hannibal remained cautiously silent, but Will’s judgement came easily and rapidly. He calmly plucked the almost-forgotten joint from Hannibal’s fingers.

“Good job I'm not someone else,” he commented, holding Hannibal’s eyes as he sucked in another deep drag, and exhaled a wreath of smoke with a smile.

At that, Hannibal relaxed visibly. He brought his hand to Will’s face, and Will leaned into it, kissing his knuckles where they grazed his lips.

“Shall I tell you what I saw when we first met?” Hannibal asked.

“Once you’d established my gender, that is,” Will smiled.

“I didn’t want to offend by accident - manners, however good or polite, are very gendered,” Hannibal said.

Will remembered it clearly - the moment when Hannibal crystallised his approach to Will by offering to hang up his coat. He might use male pronouns for him but Will knew the truth.

“I saw something I couldn’t control,” said Hannibal. “Something I wouldn’t want to, in any case. It’s the reason I tried to send you away. But that was doomed from the start, because you already inhabited me. All I saw were echoes of you, until you came back.”

In a rush, Will realised he’d been holding his breath. Hannibal’s meaning gripped him - the description of the same restless, inexplicable knowing which had driven him to seek out Hannibal again.

“I knew I was right to come find you again,” he whispered.

Hannibal held him tightly. “Now I have you, I wouldn’t give you up for the world.”

A sudden and unusual shyness overtook Will. He tucked his head under Hannibal’s chin, hiding, unsure how to respond.

“Not even for a replacement of that cut-glass Voneche decanter you broke,” Hannibal continued, in a wistful tone.

“You said that wasn’t expensive!” Will said, in horror. And then, “Oh shit, why did I believe that - *nothing* you own is not expensive. I’m really, really sorry-”

Hannibal shushed him in between bouts of laughter, until Will joined in, giggling guiltily. “I really am sorry, I’ll be more careful.”

They finished the rest of the joint like that, wrapped around each other, kissing languidly when not breaking out in fits of laughter. Will closed his eyes and savoured being held so firmly anchored to someone while also buoyantly, wonderfully high. And after the things Hannibal had just told him… He smiled and breathed in the warm scents of Hannibal’s skin, a raw earthy-salt beneath his aftershave. A whispering breeze tickled his bare legs, each shiver of air as distinct as a kiss on his warm tingling skin.

“What about your neighbours?” Will asked, though he wasn't sure why it was important. “Can they see us?”

“If they’re desperate to see us I’m sure they can,” Hannibal replied, reaching for the cherries. He balanced the bowl on his stomach and began picking through them. “People can be devastatingly predictable. So let’s give them something to look at.”

He selected a particularly ripe, fat one and pushed the pit out with his thumb. Cherry juice dripped down his fingers, staining them purple-red. Will opened his mouth for Hannibal to push the broken flesh inside, sucking the juice from his fingertips. The salt of Hannibal’s skin under the sticky sweetness was delicious, and Will chased the stray drips with his tongue. Hannibal retrieved another cherry and pitted it again, but this time held it to Will’s open mouth, pressing it to his lips and smearing them with juice. Will watched him with half-closed eyes, then grinned and took it neatly from his finger.

“Are my lips stained now?” he said, licking them thoughtfully.

“Yes, but not evenly. Here,” said Hannibal, and dragged a finger, dripping with fresh juice, across the bow of Will’s lips.

Will’s breath caught when Hannibal swiped his thumb over his bottom lip, slowly, deliberately. He darted out his tongue to curl around it, and Hannibal pushed it into his mouth. Sucking on it, Will groaned quietly, though probably loud enough for any curious neighbours to hear. Hannibal shoved the bowl out of the way, and surged over him, enfolding Will in his arms and pressing him with hot, devouring kisses. Will groaned again, happily, louder, and twined his legs through Hannibal’s, holding him fast.

Hannibal’s kisses slowed in their urgency. It was still warm and mellow outside, and with Hannibal heavy on top of him, mouthing down his neck and lazily grinding against him, Will had plenty to

enjoy. His pyjama shirt was tugged aside so Hannibal could drag the broad of his tongue over his exposed nipple. Will shivered, humming with pleasure, and Hannibal sat back on his haunches, leaving Will sprawled out shamelessly beneath him.

“Plenty for the neighbours to see?” Will said, placing his arms above his head and wriggling himself back comfortably. He was sure he looked wrecked by now, flushed and loose-limbed, lips stained with berry juice, clothes askew. His cock was hardening and the loose pyjama shorts did little to hide it.

Hannibal considered a moment, assessing Will with narrowed eyes. “It may be time to go upstairs. I don’t think I like the idea of anyone but me seeing you this way.”

Will gave him a wide, bright smile. “Yes, please,” he said, drawing his knee up and poking Hannibal in the chest with it. Hannibal kissed it, and Will imagined Hannibal pressing inside of him, right then and there, with that intent, possessive expression. Vaguely aware that his mouth had fallen open, he nodded and said, “Let’s do that.”

Hannibal’s hand tightened on his thigh, halting him before he could move. He looked thoughtful once more, focused on where his fingers caressed Will’s leg.

“Your skin is exceptionally soft,” Hannibal said, as he palm skimmed up towards his hip and back down again. “Do you shave or wax?”

Will laughed at the suddenness of the question, and flopped back against the cushion. “Isn't that a very personal thing to ask?” he said, chin in the air. “I shave, if you must know.”

“I don't mean to pry, I am merely curious.”

“Yes, your hands are curious,” Will answered, smiling Hannibal’s out-of-place primness. “Don’t stop them.”

Hannibal bent close to his thigh, kissed it, then looked up at Will. “Has anyone ever shaved you before?”

“My legs? No. No part of me, actually.” Will’s eyes had drifted shut, but he opened them again, struggling to establish if that was a real question. “Is that a thing? Do people like that?”

Hannibal smiled, a slow spreading one which flared a rising heat in Will’s spine. “Anything can be ‘a thing’, you know. There are no limits.”

“You want to?”

“Yes. If you'll allow me.”

A lovely image came to him, of Hannibal’s hands wrapped gently around his ankle, holding him still while the razor sighed over his skin. Being rinsed clean, bathed and dried, like a ritual worship. Will swallowed.

“Okay,” he said, and leaned up for a kiss.

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The bedroom was cool and quiet after the garden - no rustling leaves or lazy breezes, just a dark, enveloping intimacy. Will made straight for the bathroom, expecting Hannibal to follow. When he didn't, Will hovered in the doorway.

"Aren't we going in here?"

Hannibal shook his head, and directed Will towards to bed.

"Lie down," he said. "I'll be back in a moment."

Will did as he was told, beyond questioning Hannibal's methods and content to lay back dreamily instead. In the mirror over the mantle his pale legs shone, softly luminous, amongst the deeper shadows surrounding him. He remembered the afternoon he'd first noticed it - how he'd laughed and teased Hannibal, and then indulged in some enthusiastic experimentation of how it could be put to use. He was still considering his reflection, laid out on the bed, when Hannibal joined him again.

He hoisted himself up onto his elbows to watch as Hannibal unzipped a leather case. In it was a sleek, black electric razor with three large round heads, angled and flexible.

"I prefer a cut-throat blade in the morning," Hannibal said. "But this is useful for evening touch ups." With a press of his thumb, it buzzed softly as the minute blades began to whirr. "I want you to sit with your legs over mine."

Will made himself comfortable against the soft, plentiful pillows and stretched his legs out over Hannibal's lap. Hannibal's hands were on him immediately, warm dry palms running over his bare skin, sliding up his thighs. The first touch of the razor was cold, but the metal heads warmed quickly. Hannibal placed it close to his shin, resting it unmoving, letting Will feel the gentle vibrations on his skin. Looking satisfied, Hannibal slowly buzzed up towards his knee. Will squirmed a little, and laughed, covering his eyes.

"Sorry, it tickles," he said.

"Just relax," said Hannibal, laughing back at him. "Does this help?"

He followed the path of the razor with the flat of his hand, soothing as it went, and heightening the prickling warmth which murmured under Will's skin. Will nodded and let the heavy languidness in his limbs take over. Hannibal hummed in approval and held the arch of Will's foot to kiss its top. After that, Will simply shut his eyes and concentrated on the purring razor and Hannibal's proprietorial hands.

To begin with, Hannibal focused on the length of his lower legs, bending them at the knee to reach round to his calves. Then the razor buzzed around the delicate bones of Will's ankles, carefully, in small licking movements. Next were his knees, Hannibal manoeuvring him until every dip and curve around his kneecap had been traversed. Only then did the razor travel upwards, over his thighs. Will let his legs fall open, and the humming vibration as it moved along his inner thigh had quite a different effect - still dreamy and soft but now also flaring along his nerve endings, straight to his cock. Hannibal pushed aside his shorts, and Will moaned as the razor purred into the crease of his thigh. His dick was hardening again, tenting the loose material. Hannibal grazed a thumb over its length, and Will opened his eyes.

The razor still whirred between them, as Hannibal asked, "How was that?"

“Like being licked by a large cat. A big purry one,” Will laughed.

Hannibal leaned down over him and said very seriously, “Big cats cannot purr.”

Will angled his face up, close enough to kiss. “Actually, you’re wrong. Most can’t, but cheetahs can.”

Hannibal held back a smile, and kissed Will’s frown.

“Though that’s not right, you can’t be a cheetah.”

“No?” Hannibal asked, switching off the razor and settling down heavily on top of Will.

“No,” Will said, shaking his head. “A cheetah is all wrong. You’re more like, I don’t know...” Hannibal nuzzled under his jaw, squirming back into him as Hannibal growled for effect. “A lion!”

Hannibal’s laugh huffed against Will’s neck, before he raised his head to speak. “Lions can’t purr,” he said, stubbornly. “Cats who roar are not able to.”

“Maybe you purr just for me,” Will said.

Hannibal gave him a rare kind of smile - wide, soft and helpless. “Maybe.”

It showed his teeth. They were slightly crooked, which emphasised his canines and made them appear pointed. Will slid his finger past Hannibal’s lips and press the soft pad to their tip.

“See,” he said, as Hannibal gnawed gently on his finger. “These are big cat teeth. And here-” Will hooked a finger in between the buttons of Hannibal’s shirt and rubbed it through his chest hair. “This belongs to a lion too.”

“Aren’t you afraid to be in bed with such a fierce creature?” Hannibal asked.

He nosed firmly against Will’s jaw once more, then opened his mouth wide around the muscle of his neck. His pressed a little with his teeth, until each one pricked into Will’s tender skin. A thrill of something unknown passed through Will - he felt suddenly powerful, commanding. He pressed his throat back up into the pressure of the promised bite, winding his arms and legs around Hannibal, pulling him tightly against him.

“No, you would never hurt me,” Will said.

The press of teeth vanished, and Hannibal’s voice sounded hoarse below him. “Perhaps you think I'm tame?”

Will shook his head. Words formed without his conscious intervention and he let them flow out without further thought. “You're anything but tame. But you're mine.”

Hannibal blinked, curious. “What if you're wrong?”

“I don't think I am.” Will looked intently at him, into him. “Do you?”

He saw Hannibal give serious thought to his question, working through internal calculations Will could only guess at. Finally, he shook his head in answer, jerkily, as if in disbelief.

“This is falling in love, isn’t it?” Will said, in a hushed whisper. “Knowing something is dangerous but trusting it not to be.” Fleetingly, a lost expression flickered over Hannibal’s face. “And you feel the same.”

Hannibal moved so quickly, before Will could even register it to react, pinning him to the bed and crushing his lips against Will’s. Instead of jerking back, Will clung closer, fingers digging hard into Hannibal’s shoulders.

“Fuck,” Will managed to gasp out. “Fuck me, just fuck me.”

He stretched his arm out blindly, searching for the nightstand drawer where the lube was kept. Hannibal beat him to it, seizing the bottle while Will hastily shoved his shorts down. Hannibal began unbuttoning his shirt rapidly. Will pulled his own over his head and then rushed to help with Hannibal’s pants, pushing them down so he could kick them off. Hannibal’s briefs were next, and the heavy smack of his cock springing up against his stomach made Will groan with want, his hands balled into fists.

“Hurry, oh God, Hannibal-” He was cut off by Hannibal gliding slick fingers down behind his balls and pressing one firmly inside him. “Fuck, yes!”

There was little of the artful teasing Hannibal usually lavished on him but the stretch of his hole was exactly what he needed, sharp and bright and grounding. He pushed back against it, focused on opening himself up. Hannibal leaned over him, flushed and breathing hard with desperate desire. His cock was thick and solid, the head rosy and fat under the foreskin, and if Will could have waited any longer he would have knocked Hannibal’s hand away to suck him down as deep as he could. All he could do then was stare and imagine it pushing bluntly into him, the sweet fullness as he took it all.

His own cock was leaking freely and he gripped it around the base, holding himself back. Hannibal pushed another finger inside, and he moaned wantonly, grinding on it.

“Almost-” he broke off with a gasp, as Hannibal rubbed him firmly, encouraging his muscles to loosen. “Hands and knees,” Will said suddenly, “I need you now.”

Hannibal let him scramble up and turn over. He pushed his face into the pillows, bent down on his elbows. It felt right this way - animal and intimate, especially when Hannibal draped himself over Will’s back, kissing and biting the back of his neck. His chest hair tickled and he could feel the heaviness of Hannibal’s cock pushing between his thighs, and there was that feeling again - of being safe, but balanced on the brink of something large and wild.

“I should talk you into having a little patience,” Hannibal said, low into his ear. “But I don’t want to. I want you to be mine.”

“I am,” Will said, raising his head from the pillow. “God, I really am. Just hold still and let me-”

Hannibal growled and nipped him sharply on his neck, then pulled away. His teeth closed hard on the soft flesh of Will’s ass before he straightened to kneel behind Will. Will gasped harshly, and listened to the sound of Hannibal slicking his cock. When he was done he nudged it against his hole and stilled, waiting. Will bit his lip and groaned, pushing back against it and testing his body’s resistance. He pressed a little harder, feeling the give, relaxing himself in deliberate stages. The tight burn as the head slid inside was sweetly intense, and he worked himself on it, fisting his own

cock as he did so. Hannibal's fingers were painful on his hips, digging deep into the skin. Slowly, he slid back further and still it wasn't enough - he wanted to be fucked, taken, claimed.

"Now, please, now," he said, and barely had time to draw breath before Hannibal pushed deeper, until he was seated fully inside Will.

Will shuddered and gasped, the press of his cock and the weighty swell of Hannibal's balls nestled against his own were urgently overwhelming. He moaned loudly when Hannibal slid out smoothly, and then pressed inside again. After that, there was nothing holding either of them back. Hannibal wrapped his arms around Will's chest tightly and fucked him like that, almost immobilised, spreading his thighs wide so Hannibal could pull him back onto his cock as he thrust. It felt out of control, both of them so loud, filling the room with assorted moans and pants and grunts. Hannibal pulled his head to one side and bit the meat of his neck, softly worrying with his teeth, breath hot over his increasingly damp skin.

Into his ear, Hannibal breathed, "What did you say I was?"

Will cried out, he was so close but still desperate, craving more. "A lion," he gasped. "Mine."

"Yours, yes," Hannibal growled. "And in return, you are all mine."

"God, Hannibal, fuck me," Will gasped, nodding. "Harder, please."

Releasing his hold around Will, Hannibal leaned back and worked his hips harder. His hands moved restlessly over his back and sides, down Will's thighs too. Will moaned into the pillow and arched his back, as Hannibal's hand snaked around him to grasp his cock. Will thrust into it wildly, erratically, and came loudly, clenching down hard on Hannibal, still buried inside him. Hannibal draped himself over Will's back and wrapped his arms around him once more, holding him tight and thrusting into him in rapid, smooth strokes. He came like that, with his face pressed to Will's neck, and held on for some time after, as if he might never let go.

A few seconds passed and, with a small amount of struggle, Will managed to turn over. Hannibal pulled back just enough to allow it, then settled heavily back down. His breath was hot against Will's skin, his lips pressing it every so often, but with kisses or words Will could not tell. He put his arms around Hannibal's shoulders, shut his eyes and thought about love.

*

Much later, after a shower involving much giggling and kissing and pretend growling, and after Hannibal had returned to something closer to his usual composed self, they curled into each other in bed. Will suspected he'd said enough for one night, but weed loosened his tongue and Hannibal watched him so intensely and longingly, he couldn't seem to help it.

"I'm not going to change my mind, you don't need to worry," Will said, peering up into his face. "I'm staying right here."

"Even though I am a dangerous, untamed lion?" Hannibal smiled.

Before he answered, Will thought carefully. There could be no going back once he said it.

"I'm not a mind-reader," he said. "Empathy doesn't tell me what it is you've done. And I don't know if I want the details. But I see deeply, and in you I find complexity and beauty and strength."

He paused, and then ploughed on. “And I think I should be the one to love you.”

Hannibal stared at him for so long, Will began to wonder if he’d erred. Maybe Hannibal would deny he wanted Will’s love, after everything. Maybe it was too hard to accept. Maybe this was all a terrible idea.

“What about the reverse?” Hannibal said, after an uncomfortable amount of time had passed. “Should I be the one to love you?”

Will nodded. “You already do… don’t you?” he asked, hoping.

There was another aching moment where neither of them moved. The blank fear in Hannibal’s eyes was unguarded, briefly, and Will could easily imagine him slipping out of his arms, away, never to be seen again. Then his expression shifted, revealing something raw and honest underneath.

“My darling Will,” he said, finally. “How could I not?”

End Notes

Title taken from The Velvet Underground and Nico song

Find the timestamps series here. And for a complete list of all the stories and for easy viewing of all the art, we made a QS website.

I'm on tumblr and twitter (and very occasionally on pillowfort and dreamwidth).

I also write my own fiction which you can learn more about here.

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